



To promote the economic, social and environmental viability of Northern California by enhancing and preserving the water rights, supplies and water quality of our members.

Policy Statement of David Guy Before the State Water Resources Control Board

Petitions to Implement the Lower Yuba River Accord in 2007

December 11, 2006

Chair Doduc and members of the Board, my name is David Guy. I am the Executive Director of the Northern California Water Association (NCWA).

The Northern California Water Association strongly supports the lower Yuba River Accord (Accord), and specifically the 2007 pilot program. I want to commend the State Board for your approval earlier this year of the 2006 pilot program. I understand that program is working really well. Moreover, all 17 of the local, state and federal agencies, agricultural interests and conservation groups involved in the Accord, are supportive of the 2006 pilot and the 2007 pilot programs.

A major benefit of the 2006 and 2007 pilot programs is that they enable beneficial elements of the lower Yuba River Accord, including the higher minimum instream flows, to move forward now. While the pilot programs are being implemented, the Accord parties will be able to complete their comprehensive Environmental Impact Report and Environmental Impact Statement as required by the California Environmental Quality Act and the National Environmental Policy Act.

The petitions before you today represent a rare opportunity for the Board to advance water policy in California. You can send a strong signal that collaboration and imagination among diverse interests can not only resolve complex disputes, but more importantly that the State Board will embrace legally sound and responsible efforts. The legacy we all desire of this Board is that it enables us to solve problems together. Your approval of a 2007 pilot program for the lower Yuba River Accord would be a good example of this commitment.

The Sacramento Valley is a unique mosaic of farmland, broad fields, waterfowl habitat, spawning grounds for salmon, steelhead and other fish species. It includes numerous cities, towns and rural communities. To serve the people of this region, and meet their environmental responsibilities, the public agencies in Northern California are placing the finishing touches on an innovative integrated regional water management program. (See www.norcalwater.org.) Many of these same public agencies, along with NCWA, are collaborating with urban, agricultural and environmental interests from throughout the state to improve water quality, habitat conditions and to help meet supplemental water needs outside this region. The lower Yuba River Accord is a key part of this integrated regional water management program.

We believe the Accord will resolve decades of controversy and litigation. More specifically, it will provide a solid foundation of progressive water management actions. First and foremost, it will significantly increase minimum instream flows on the lower Yuba River, improving habitat for the Yuba's wild salmon, steelhead and other species. It will also provide funding for Yuba River restoration activities, and for flood protection, and sound local water management in Yuba County.

The Accord is an opportunity for the State Board to fulfill its mission and showcase its Strategic Plan and Watershed Management Initiative by publicly encouraging diverse parties to collaborate and resolve complex water disputes.

For these reasons, NCWA strongly urges the Board to approve the petitions for the 2007 Pilot Program, so the parties can continue their implementation of the lower Yuba River Accord.